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THE HALF-WOMAN.

A BIOLOGIST'S ANSWER TO SUFFRAGETTES.

NATURE'S MISTAKES.

(From Our New York Correspondent.)

The most serious scientific indictment of the feminist movement that has appeared in America is in the form of a statement by Dr. William T. Sedgwick, Professor of Biology and Public Health at the famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Professor Sedgwick has written a number of scientific works which are recognised as authoritative, and he has been called on by the Federal authorities at Washington and by municipalities to give advice on matters relating to biology and public health. Professor Sedgwick says:—

“It is a fact that in the human embryo in its very earliest stages no sex characteristics are discoverable. But after a period still early in a normal development sex becomes manifest, and henceforward differentiation is continuous. In this, however, as in all of Nature's vast operations, there are mistakes made. Hence, we have masculine women and feminine men. It is not surprising that it seems to be these very masculine women, these mistakes of Nature, aided and abetted by their counterparts, the feminine men, who are largely responsible for the feminist movement. But what is surprising, or at least unfortunate, is that these ‘half-women’ should achieve a certain leadership over many normal women, who have all the instinctive, ineradicable feelings of witchhood and motherhood.

“If the feminists are allowed free sway there will be a total destruction of wifehood and the home, but there will never be a relegation of man to a subservient position, there will never be a society in which women will rule men. Men possess the dominating brute strength, and in the last analysis government rests on force. Evolution has developed in man gentleness and the realisation of a protective duty toward the physically weaker woman.

“How deeply this sense of chivalry is ingrained in man's nature is shown by the extreme tests to which it has been put of late;

saves from quick extermination the window-smashing, house-burning militants of England. Let the feminist programme of greater sex liberty for women be carried through, then will women indeed find that the knightliness and chivalry of gentleness have vanished and in their stead will arise a rough male power that will place women where it chooses. Long before any such sorry state of affairs becomes an actuality, man, seeing the things he most cherishes in danger, will firmly shut down on the feminist activities, and putting women back in their homes, say: 'That is where you belong. Now stay there.'

HOME THE TRUE SPHERE.

"Ask any normal woman her candid opinion and she will tell you she enjoys being mastered. The lower type of woman enjoys physical mastery, the higher type mental and spiritual mastery. I believe the women of their own good sense, moved solely by their own instinctive feelings of wifehood and motherhood, will return to their homes and their home interests. Feminism will soon be looked back upon as the most absurd and dangerous vagary of a restless age.

"Sex, instead of being a comparatively unimportant and superficial difference between men and women, is a deep-seated structural difference affecting probably every organ, every tissue, and every cell of the entire body. There is no reason to doubt that sex makes a difference throughout the entire structure, brain included. My contact with women in the class-room has abundantly satisfied me that, especially at certain times, there is a great mental difference between the sexes.

"I have taught classes of men only, of women only, and of both sexes. I have always observed that I naturally use, and am obliged to use, different methods when teaching women. In a class usually taught by lecture the girls may sit there and ache without any suspicion on the part of the teacher, who is perhaps absorbed in his own exposition. But laboratory work, and especially work in a modern technical professional or scientific school, is particularly exacting and brings to the surface the handicaps on any constant mental or physical labours of women. And I believe that one reason why so few women become doctors or clergymen or lawyers is because they know well that they cannot either trust themselves or be trusted to keep at all times appointments involving arduous physical and mental toil. Obviously, at times, women are absolutely unfitted for 'policemen,' for jury duty, or for public life of any sort. Counsel would be justified in raising the question of fact and even of challenging fitness.

THE REAL CAUSE.

"Instead of realising and trying to overcome the main cause of their discontent, the lack of useful employment, women are shriek-

ing for 'liberty'—What is this 'liberty' for which they are clamouring? In what tyranny are they held other than the one that holds men? The world is their taskmaster and the world demands service from those who would live. Is the new 'liberty' to be found in hod-carrying and bricklaying and bookkeeping preferable to that which women now enjoy? These and other hard, obscure occupations make up the major part of the work of men, and if women leave the home and take their industrial place in the world these are the tasks that the greater number of them will have to do. Do not the women actually have more change, more novelty, more freedom, more leisure in their work? The man's taskmaster is often a difficult boss; the woman's her family.

"The real cause for women's wages being lower than men's is not masculine injustice. It is partly women's lesser strength, less endurance, and less concentration—this last resulting from the fact that she is and ought to be always subject to withdrawal from her work by offers of matrimony. To release man from financial responsibility would be disastrous. Feeling no obligation to support either his wife or his wife's relatives, or, for that matter, any women folk, man would be a far more formidable competitor for women than he is now.

"The revolution offered by those wild women of to-day who are playing with edged tools such as 'woman suffrage' and 'sex adventure' and 'feminism' of any kind would bring about a social, industrial and moral revolution compared to which the French Revolution would be merely social child's play. It would mean a degeneration and a degradation of human fibre which would turn back the hands of time a thousand years."

